The Nagasaki Trade of the Tokugawa Era : Archives, Statistics, and Management

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The study of Tokugawa-period trade policy poses problems because of the poor survival of archives. *Rōjū* took their records with them when they vacated office, as did *bugyō* in Nagasaki. Trade records transmitted to Edo had a poor survival rate. In contrast, the records of the Kaisho (trade office) and of interpreters in Nagasaki were remarkably well maintained up to the Meiji Ishin. We know less about the process of loss in 1868 than we do about the effort of a small number of individuals to recover records. In Japanese sources, trade statistics—apart from originals for 1709–1714 (wrongly said to be Edo files)—survive in mere scraps for both the Chinese and Dutch trades. As a consequence, the archives of the Dutch factory on Dejima are not only a complete run for the Dutch trade, but even with gaps compensate in part for the loss of records of the trade with China.

Sakoku did not imply intent to reduce trade. It reached its peak in 1661, and thereafter the shortage of silver and copper successively posed problems. The Dutch trade receded from the 1690s. The Chinese trade by contrast recovered briefly in the 1690s and the early years of the following century, partly through the presence of a lobby favoring imports, partly by some upturn in the copper supply. Nagasaki's prosperous days were, however, behind it by the 1720s. A recovery from the end of the eighteenth century was not broad based, but simply a burgeoning exchange of marine products for medicinal products. The Nagasaki authorities, seeking a quasi-monopoly of this trade for the port, had long sought to eliminate Satsuma from much of it. The evasion of restrictions was exaggerated by facile assumptions about the extent of smuggling.

Keywords: archives, trade statistics, silver, silk, copper, Ryukyus, Satsuma, Nagasaki, China, Dejima, smuggling

1. Introduction

Japanese trade is a story of trade buoyed up by an abundant supply of silver in the first sixty years of the seventeenth century, followed by progressive contraction, especially after 1715, although towards the end of the eighteenth century, there was an upturn in Chinese trade. This story has also to be seen in the context of the *sakoku* policy from the 1630s. One thing

is clear, however, from the tenor of the statistical evidence. The Japanese were not actually seeking policy reasons to reduce the volume of trade at that time or even to lower the ceilings set to trade either in 1685 or in the much less happy circumstances of 1715.

Trade continued to grow for several decades to a peak in 1661. On the Japanese side it was imports and not exports that provided the drive for promoting trade. The key commodity was silk, in which domestic production was deficient in both quantity and quality. The rise in incomes among daimyo and upper samurai amid the prosperity of a stable and increasingly un-warlike Tokugawa regime accounts for the sharp rise in silk imports. Japanese weaving itself was already of a high standard; the weakness lay in the inferior quantity and quality of raw silk. But quite quickly the pattern began to change, with raw silk holding up better than cloth in imports. In other words, the domestic industry was already maturing, in time virtually terminating imports. The change in silk was to be part of a process over two centuries of silent but profound change in domestic production: it laid the basis in the open economy of the 1860s and 1870s for a dramatic expansion of exports of both tea and silk.

For foreigners, the lure of Japan lay in silver, important in money supply in many countries. On a world scale, Japan's output of silver was large, and expansion of mining provided in the short term what seemed a painless means of payment. For Europeans, lacking domestic supplies, they had to acquire silk in China and Southeast Asia, or in the case of the Dutch, in default of supplies, on occasion by plundering vessels laden with silk for Japan. The revamped *bugyōsho* (governor's administration, located in offices on four sites) of 1633, with power transferred from local elite figures to shogunal officers dispatched from Edo, put the five decrees on *sakoku* into effect in Nagasaki. The move of the Dutch from Hirado to Nagasaki in 1641 was primarily prompted by the simple urge of concentrating all foreign trade in a single port under the watchful eye of a reinforced *bugyōsho*.

Seventeenth-century Japanese trade was an exchange of silk for silver, gold, and later copper; silk accounting for 70 percent or so of the value of imports. Japanese early expansion attracted vessels from three European nations in addition to the Portuguese already using Nagasaki as a base since 1570. It is impossible to quantify this early trade, not least because of its many channels: Japanese red-seal ships, Portuguese vessels, Dutch and Chinese and fleetingly English and Spanish. Chinese vessels traded at many locations along the coast of Kyushu in contrast to Europeans tied *ab initio* to either Hirado or Nagasaki. In a recasting of control of trade, all foreign trade narrowed down by the end of the 1630s to Dutch and Chinese traders, with Nagasaki becoming the sole center of foreign trade. The control of the trade lay firmly in the hands of shogunal officials, aided by a new breed of interpreters employed directly by them, and not as in the past by the foreign traders. One result was that meaningful statistical totals for commodities began to appear from 1648.

This paper is a study of archives, and of the overall statistical profile of Japanese trade over two centuries. Many of the sources, and indeed most quantitative sources, have failed to survive in Japan. Contracting from a peak in 1661, meager evidence suggests stagnation from the 1670s. But there was an upturn in the 1690s and the following decade, and the case was even argued for increasing imports. Chinese trade was later to stage a recovery in the late eighteenth century. Vessels were fewer, but cargo values significantly higher. The policy of the *rōjū* is far from clear in the absence of *rōjū* archives. Even papers by officials

such as the surviving papers of Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1675–1725), advisor to two shoguns, 1709–1716, are all too rare.[1]

The older view of *sakoku* was that it was an isolationist and reactionary policy. It was well summarized as late as 1970 by the American historian Harootunian, for whom the *uchi harai rei* (fire and repel order) of 1825 was "little more than a tired restatement of Tokugawa isolationship, which revealed the incapacity to see beyond the immediate implications of events."[2] The work of Iwao in the 1950s and 1960s, followed by Tashiro Kazui's writing which provided a coherent economic and diplomatic account of Tsushima and the Korean trade, laid the basis for reinterpreting *sakoku* policy.[3] In some ways Iwao's is the more influential reinterpretation. He claimed that *sakoku* was directed against existing Catholic countries, and that a reopening of English trade might have occurred had England sought it in later times when, after the reign of Charles II, the problem of a Portuguese consort no longer arose. In the absence of archival evidence, however, Iwao not only adverted to a Dutch effort to foment Japanese unease about the English vessel, the *Return*, seeking trade in 1673, but assumed that it accounted for the rejection of the English request.[4] The case was taken a step further in 1984 in the influential *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan* by Ronald Toby. He followed Iwao's arguments closely and, as a research student, had benefitted by contacts with Tashiro, at the time himself a doctoral candidate.[5] Toby argued that "the possibilities of the system were far more open-ended, more manifold, than what has been visible in the received vision of the Tokugawa past."[6] He saw Matsudaira Sadanobu, leading senior councillor in 1787–1793, as taking advantage in 1793 of the absence of contacts other than with the Dutch and Chinese for a century and a half, to create an argument that the Russian request for trade was precluded by "ancestral law."[7]

Much discussion of the issues was to take place in Japan from the 1970s to the 1990s. For Arano Yasunori, in the subtlest contribution to the debate, the central measure in the *sakoku* policy of the 1630s was the prohibition on Japanese going abroad. The shogunate's long-standing policy was to avoid being drawn further into the troubles of East Asia (the reason for prohibiting Japanese settlement overseas). Contemporaries did not, on his argument, see the issue as one of either opening or closing the country, and the aim was to conserve orderly relations with Japan's neighbors. Only from the 1790s onwards, faced with novel Western appearances, did a clear-cut idea of a closed society begin to take a forceful shape.[8]

It is commonplace for modern accounts to refer to four portals (*yottsu no kuchi* 四つの口) of external trade: Nagasaki itself, Korea (via the island of Tsushima), the Ryukyus (for Chinese goods to Nagasaki or Satsuma), and Ezo. This concept is a somewhat optimistic assessment of the reality and extent of "foreign" trade. Its significance is weakened by the

1 Ackroyd 1979; Nakai 1988.
2 *Towards Restoration: the Growth of Political Consciousness in Tokugawa Japan*, quoted in Cullen 2003, p. 307.
3 Tashiro's work was first summarized in an article in *Acta Asiatica* 1976. Tashiro 1981 is his major work on the topic.
4 Iwao 1963, pp. 30-31; Iwao 1976, p. 16.
5 Toby 1991, pp. xxvii, xxxvii (preface to original 1984 edition).
6 Toby 1991, p. 11.
7 Toby 1991 (reprint of 1984 edition), pp. 10–15, 24, 242.
8 Arano 1994; Arano 2005.

arguments of Nakamura and others about an overstatement of Tsushima trade.[9] As for Ezo, the absence of a frontier in the chain of islands to the north of Japan suggests that the trade was a domestic one, which for well over a century expanded little.

There are two practical challenges in the statistical study of trade. One is that notional limits to foreign trade set in 1685, while intended to define firm ceilings to exports of silver, proved flexible in regard to the actual size of imports, once payment was not in silver. The second and related problem is Satsuma's trade with the Ryukyus, for which ungenerous notional limits and efforts to confine its shipments to sales in Nagasaki were set in the 1680s.[10] These were never observed by Satsuma and, for political reasons, were de facto unenforceable by the shogunate. This situation makes it necessary to look at allegations of smuggling, which in the absence of reliable documentary evidence, are sometimes too readily made.

2. Archives and Lost Documents

There is a paradox in early Japanese statistics. They were abundant in the mid-seventeenth century, when they were few in Europe. But though European trade statistics were slower to appear by as much as two or three generations, when they did appear they survived, in contrast to Japanese figures. Trade data, when passed from Nagasaki to Edo, had a poor survival rate.[11] By contrast, the sources remaining in Nagasaki remained complete until after virtual total loss in 1868. Compilation from Japanese sources of either a full or a partial record of the Dutch and Chinese trades is now impossible. A problem does not arise for the Dutch trade as the Dutch sources compiled in Dejima provide a remarkably detailed record. For the Chinese trade, were we to depend on Japanese sources, apart from isolated *satsu* for 1709–1714 and a private notebook of a merchant in 1804, we would be almost entirely in the dark.[12] The statistics, in so far as they can be assembled, otherwise come from the Dutch records.

Good record keepers though they were, the Dutch did not consistently transfer statistical information from the *jonken boekjes* (booklets recording cargoes on Chinese junks) into the *dagregister* office diary or daily record kept by the *opperhoofd* (head of the factory). From the 1640s, the *dagregister* records much detail of the import trade because figures for silk supplied by their competitors were of vital interest to the Dutch. The export trade on the other hand was recorded perfunctorily in the *dagregister*, and references to copper begin to recur frequently only from the 1680s. For imported cargoes, a separate record for 1652–1657 was a precursor of the *jonken boekjes* of later decades.[13] Early practice in relation to recording exports is not clear, but in December 1689 the "possible cargoes"

9 Nakamura 2000, pp. 173–91; Lewis 2003, pp. 96–98. Diplomatic ties—*tsūshin* 通信—of course survived.

10 There is some uncertainty about low and varied early figures for the size of the permitted trade. It is as low as 120 *kan* in Tashiro (1976, p. 91). The problem rests in the distinction between the tribute trade to China and the private trade. Kaempfer's estimate was 125,000 *tael* (or 1250 *kanme*), and may serve also as a working figure for the eighteenth century. Bodart-Bailey 1999, p. 228.

11 See Cullen 2013 for a survey of Edo, daimyo, and Nagasaki records.

12 For the 1709–1714 returns, see "Kaidai" by Yamawaki (1970), twelve pages at the end of volume 2 of *Tōban kamotsuchō* (1970). For the manuscript of 1804 by the merchant Murakami under the title *Sashidashi chō* 差出帳, see Yamawaki 1964, pp. 196–203.

13 Nagazumi 1987, p. 6. Nagazumi drew the details of trade in 1652–1657 from AJ 823 *Staten houdende opgave van goederen door Chinese junken an Nagasaki angevoerd* in the State archives in the Hague

of eighteen outgoing junks were noted in a *jonken boekje*.[14] With figures entered in *jonken boekjes* there was no compelling reason to enter precise figures in the *dagregister* itself. But for that reason the later loss of the *jonken boekjes* resulted for historians in an irreparable loss for the years up to 1706 when their compilation seems to have ceased.

Dutch access to information seems to have remained problem-free until a novel clampdown was imposed from 1682 on information on the Chinese trade in the face of a worsening crisis in the supply of silver and, post-1684, an abrupt rise in the number of Chinese vessels. In 1689 the Chinese were corralled in a *Tōjin yashiki* 唐人屋敷, (often referred to by the Dutch as "the Chinese island"), an enclave of 229 by 133 meters surrounded by a wall and four watch towers, a temporary home every year for over two thousand individuals in unhygienic and difficult circumstances.

The Japanese interpreters of Dutch now lacked a ready flow of information from the interpreters of Chinese. Nevertheless, an interpreter, Motoki Tarōzaemon 本木太郎左衛門, remained an informant to a greater or lesser degree, until his death in 1695. In noting in October that without him the rumored amount of copper on seventeen vessels could not be confirmed, the *dagregister* seems to hint that his services had remained useful.[15] In the circumstances of the time he did not have a replacement. But a trickle of information from various, usually lesser, sources was possible in part because the junior Dutchmen, many of whom had remained for years in Dejima, spoke some or much Japanese.[16]

The monumental work by Nagazumi to reconstitute the Chinese trade from the *dagregister* suggests unintentionally that the Dutch were more poorly informed than they were. Much of the recorded information was too vague for use in her scholarly approach.[17] Intermittent information, however, continued to be received. On one occasion, uniquely in the reporting of trade, the *dagregister* noted in November 1696 after five junks had left, that "secretly we manage[d] to get the little book in which their sales had been recorded."[18] The *jonken boekjes* continued in existence: on an occasion in November 1703 the *opperhoofd* recorded that "the junks booklet and the diary give different numbers."[19]

The information flow deteriorated very sharply for 1708–1718. It is tempting to assume that a ragged supply of intelligence led to abandonment of the *jonken boekjes* (never mentioned in the *dagregister* after 1706), and these now obsolete documents were lost with the passage of time. An abrupt upturn in 1718 was made possible by the fact that a Dutch interpreter was brother to the chief interpreter of the Chinese island. In February 1718, Ichijirōzaemon, the chief interpreter, provided a bill of lading for nine outward junks.[20] Thereafter the information came from his brother. This situation lasted till July 1727 when the *opperhoofd* was told by an interpreter, "On pain of corporal punishment the governor

14 DDR 1986, vol. 1 (1680–1690), p. 83.
15 DDR 1987, vol. 2 (1690–1700), p. 60.
16 Many of the Dutch resided for years in Dejima. The slaves of the Dutch, brought by individual Dutchmen as their servants, may have spent the rest of their lives in the factory, even after their owners had left. That may explain why they acquired a good command of Japanese, about which a question was posed at the shogunal reception of the Dutch in 1684. DDR 1986, vol. 1 (1680–1690), p. 32. For a useful account of the duration of stays and responsibilities of some of the members of the factory, see Matsui 2015, pp. 151–57.
17 Nagazumi 1987.
18 DDR 1987, vol. 2 (1690–1700), p. 79.
19 DDR 1990, vol. 3 (1700–1710), p. 59
20 DDM 1700–1740, p. 222.

had forbidden the Japanese to supply us with information concerning Chinese exports and imports."[21] Two years later an interpreter, when asked for a price list, replied, "The governors had forbidden the servants of the Chinese island to disclose the prices."[22] A flow resumed in 1732–1738. Interpreters, like Japanese officials at large in financial penury, privately borrowed money from the Dutch. That may explain some of the information flow. But by 1740 the new regularity of the flow must have reflected an easing in policy. The informants were either rapporteur interpreters (*nenban tsūji* 年番通事), or interpreters well established enough to later reach that rank. Information was also usually received in writing, and was without fail and in full recorded in the *dagregister*. Thereafter the only interruption for the remainder of the century was in exports only for 1754/1755. In October 1755 the interpreters, when asked for details of cargoes in and out, informed the Dutch that "the interpreters of the Chinese island have been forbidden to inform them about the cargo (sic) of the junks."[23]

Edo government and Nagasaki *bugyōsho* retained within their archives few policy documents. *Rōjū* as a matter of course took them away with them at the end of their period of office. And Nagasaki *bugyō* seem to have done likewise. While statistics appear to have survived very well in Nagasaki, they were less secure in Edo. Comprehensive runs of figures from 1648 were furnished on at least two known occasions (at Hakuseki's request in 1708 and on a *rōjū* order in 1719); perhaps two of many such requests. They imply either a lack of material already in Edo or simply poor awareness of what was held there. In the great assemblage of documents from several centuries collected in the late 1840s and 1850s, the *Tsūkō ichiran* 通航一覧 (TKIR), launched by a team engaged by shogunal order in the late 1840s, there is a gap for the Dutch trade after 1670 and for Chinese trade after 1672 despite their consulting the Hakuseki records. The TKIR lacks runs of figures for other items apart from listing until 1718 gold for the Dutch.[24]

For copper, despite its importance as the dominant export, there is a remakable lacuna in records for three and a half decades. The TKIR has no details of copper. Katsu Kaishū 勝海舟, with an official brief in the 1880s, despite past service as an official both in Tokugawa and Meiji times, was able to provide litttle data on trade at large. In the case of copper, for the Dutch trade there were gaps in his figures, which themselves appear to have been drawn from isolated sources.[25] Contrary to belief that pre-1868 trade figures had survived in the finance ministry of later times and were lost in the earthquake in 1923, the ministry had in fact inherited little from the Kanjōsho.[26]

21 DDM 1700–1740, p. 326.
22 DDM 1700–1740, p. 368.
23 DDR 1993, vol. 7 (1740–1760), p. 308.
24 The figures appear in TKIR 1912–1923, vol 4, *kan* 巻 160 and 161. See also footnote 62.
25 For the Dutch, he had figures for 1698, 1715, and a run for 1760–1839 (1775, 1776, 1777, and 1820 missing), and for the Chinese trade for 1755–1839 (1820 missing). Katsu does not indicate sources, but the sequence of information suggests that he drew on three *shahon* 写本 for his Dutch data, and two for his Chinese data. He also had isolated and imperfect data for Chinese trade for 1688, 1698, 1742, 1746, and 1749 from a single *shahon*. From *a further* three isolated sources, he appears to have drawn figures for 1749 (a duplicate figure), 1765, and 1791. Katsu 1976, pp. 3–60 (from part four of *Suijinroku*).
26 The absence in Meiji times of surviving trade data for earlier years is confirmed in the huge *Nihon zaisei keizai shiryō* 日本財政経済史料 in ten volumes, each in two parts, assembled before the destruction of the *Ōkurashō* in the 1923 earthquake.

The surviving and unique original *satsu* on the Chinese trade of Nagaski in 1709–1714 are not as Yamawaki stated and Nagazumi and Nakamura repeated, papers from central archives in Edo.[27] They are original Nagasaki documents, collected into the sort of maverick compilation typical of the Edo era. In this instance they were collected by an unknown individual into twenty booklets, the *satsu* for individual cargoes (of which six original texts were created and signed by six individual officers for each cargo). Some of the twenty booklets containing the *satsu* were later lost and some individual *satsu* are missing within the surviving booklets. They were later bound into four *kan* by an unknown individual.[28] Unfamiliar with the *satsu*, he omitted a key word from their title.[29] An identical omission occurs in a separate document, *Nagasaki goyōdome* 長崎御用留, compiled from several sources to fill the many gaps in vessels numbered from 17 to 54.[30] Though there were several individuals involved in compiling this document (in the writing there are several hands), repetition of the omission suggests that a sole person may have been responsible for both compilations.

The two compilations, one binding originals together, the other a straightforward transcription of documents, finally reached the National Archives. The first was from a very unlikely source (*Nōshōshō kyūzō* 農商省旧蔵, the former archives of the Agriculture and Trade Ministry), the other from an unidentified one. Further illustrating the random pattern of dispersal, Kaisho 会所 repertories (*hikae mokuroku* 控目録) of its records for the year 1719 ended up in the Ōmura Municipal Library.[31] Finally, 163 files dealing with individual cases or *jiken* in the Ansei 安政 period form a small part of the *Koga zōsho* 古賀蔵書, a collection assembled by Koga Jūjiryō 古賀十二郎 (1879–1954), one of the main Nagasaki collectors of documents of Tokugawa times.[32] While no primary record of post-1715 licences to Chinese vessels survives, there is also in the Koga collection a *shahon* containing them.[33] Its status—whether a copy in official archives in 1868 or an earlier private copy—is not clear.

The records of the interpreters, for whose bureaucratic effectiveness the Dutch had a high regard, had also been well kept. In 1704, the interpreters were reported as looking at their archives as far back as 1681.[34] In May 1744, the *opperhoofd* somewhat dramatically recorded that the interpreters had been ordered "to draw up an exhaustive report about all the goods the company had imported during the last twenty-nine years. Toeksemon (sic) told me that fourteen clerks were busy day and all night copying their records concerning our imports."[35] For the interpreters of Dutch there is now scant material apart from what has been handed down in two interpreter families, the Nakayama family (now in the

27 Yamawaki 1970, pp. 1, 11; Nagazumi 1987, p. 6; Nakamura 2000, pp. 192–96.
28 Published as *Tōban kamotsuchō*, 1969–1970, 2 vols.
29 *Kamotsuchō* 貨物帳 in place of *kamotsu aratame chō* 貨物改帳. His prefixing the term *Tōban* 唐蛮 to the title of the collection, however, is correct as it included both Dutch and Chinese shipping.
30 The *Tōban kamotsu aratame chō* had a complete run for the first sixteen vessels; thereafter gaps emerged in the listing.
31 By perusing footnotes in Nakamura 2000, pp. 201, 203, 207, 237, the catalogue numbers in the Ōmura library can be identified as 102-1, 103-2, 103-3, 103-4, 103-5, 103-12, and 103-13.
32 Nakamura 2000, p. 228, footnote 109. On Koga, see Nakajima 2007, p. 37. At first a teacher in a middle school, he returned to Nagasaki to devote his life to collecting documents and writing, in a close association with the Kenritsu Toshokan.
33 Hao 2015, pp. 37 and 53, note 11.
34 DDM 1700–1740, p. 62.
35 DDR 1993, vol. 7 (1740–1760), p. 72.

Figure 1. Chinese vessel unloading into flat-bottomed boats (*sampan*). Vessels were moored in the open bay close to shore; speedy unloading was important to admit replacement of the cargo with ballast to stabilize vessels in what were at times stormy waters. (Courtesy of Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture.)

Siebold Museum in Nagasaki) and the Motoki 本木 family (shared between a museum in Nagasaki and an art gallery in Kobe). For the Chinese trade, though a substantial quantum survives for both Kaisho and interpreters, it is a small part of what once existed.

Ironically, we know more about the recovery of material in and beyond Meiji times than about the losses in 1868.[36] Apart from large batches mainly of bakumatsu papers, records in Nagasaki seem to have been either abandoned haphazardly or even given away at the time. The clearest single illustration is the primary series of *hankachō* 犯科帳 (criminal investigation records) complete from 1666 to 1867. No longer serving a purpose, as the *bugyōsho* office had ceased to exist, they were given to the police, who, likewise finding no use for them, sold them to an antiquarian dealer. The first and pioneering savior of records was Kanai Toshiyuki 金井俊行 (1850–1897), a ward official who saved many documents.[37] Held in his ward office at his death, they remained in city possession to finally find a place in the City Museum (opened in 1941). Other collections were to find a home in the prefectural library, founded in 1912. Koga himself in 1919 gave it two *satsu* of the *hankachō*; on his death, his own collection of papers went to it. Documents collected by Watanabe Kurasuke 渡辺庫輔, a local historian and writer, were deposited as late as 1964.

The vulnerability of papers even after 1868 is well illustrated in the story of the surviving *nikki* of the interpreters of Chinese for 1663 to 1715, held along with many other papers in the Seidō 聖堂 (the Confucian temple under the care of the Mukai 向井 family,

36 There is a very general but all too rare account in Yasutaka 2010, pp. 148–52.
37 For details, see Cullen 2013, p. 37.

hereditary head of the Seidō). By the time Kanai began his salvage work, only nine of ten volumes of *nikki* for the period survived. Presumably because he failed to acquire the originals, the nine were copied in 1886–1889 and from the ward office (and successor city offices) they finally reached the City Museum. As for the originals of the *nikki*, all that survived were a mere two *satsu* which passed in 1934 from the head of the family to the prefectural *kyōiku kai* 県教育会, then in the war years to the prefectural library and finally to the museum in 1959.[38]

3. Trade: Composition and Structure

The composition of trade is clear. Sugar gradually replaced silk as the major import. Figures are not readily or, indeed, at all available for many items. But many of them served a vital need, enjoying official encouragement. Ginseng (*ninjin* 人参, especially from Korea), much sought after for its medical properties, and sandalwood (*kō* 香), the source for fragrances used in domestic and formal settings, were outstanding items, and to them should be added many other pharmaceuticals.[39] The importance of this trade was already recognized in loans granted to Chinese shipowners under Tsunayoshi 綱吉 (1680–1709) and which were a subject of repayment years later under the frugal Yoshimune 吉宗 (1716–1745).[40] In April 1738, with the supply of Chinese medicines short and the good will of the Dutch being sought to encourage the Chinese traders in Batavia to respond to Japanese needs, the *opperhoofd* of the Dutch factory in Dejima noted his offer to supply these goods (were the Dutch allowed to import them): "I concluded that the Japanese cannot do without the Chinese imports."[41]

Two features have an interest out of the ordinary, even if hardly of consequence in volume terms. The first arises from the concern felt by the Nagasaki authorities about books in Chinese, leading to their listing or inspection on arrival.[42] The second is the analysis in recent times in remarkable detail by Professor Ishida Chihiro 石田千尋 from the Dutch sources of the categories of *kenjōhin* 献上品 gifts by the Dutch for the shogun; *shinmotsuhin* 進物品, gifts for high officials; and *atsuraemono* 誂物, goods ordered by or for the shogun and by Edo and Nagasaki circles.[43] The latter goods included cannons ordered by the famous artillery expert Takashima Shūhan 高島秋帆 (1798–1866), a subject studied in much detail by Ishida. Exports on Dutch vessels were in a very narrow range, but camphor was sought after and at times the supply fell well short of Dutch demand. It was, next to metals, their major export.

Unlike Europe, a multilateral trade, in which surplus earnings in trade with one country were already helping to bridge a gap between imports and exports in other areas of trade, did not exist. The absence of such a structure underlies the thinking of Japanese officials. While their emphasis in political terms was more on imports than exports, they saw the figures for exports and imports as broadly identical. In Japan imports and exports were siamese twins, and trade was effectively a single protracted operation spread over

38 *Tōtsūji Kaisho nichiroku* 1984, vol 1, pp. 1–7; vol. 7, 109–14.
39 Hellyer 2009, pp. 87, 117–20.
40 DDM 1700–1740, p. 465.
41 DDM 1700–1740, p. 479.
42 Ōba 1967, p. 67.
43 Ishida 2009.

months. At the end of the process, there was neither surplus nor deficit to carry foward, with the exception until the 1680s of an amount of silver denominated as *tsukaisutegin* 遣捨銀 (import income by the Chinese and Dutch not converted into exports, and subject to approval available for other purposes and notably the living expenses of the Chinese).[44] It was effectively the balance of trade. Originating in retained income from the proceeds of imports, it should, in theory at least, if substracted from imported commodity figures, give us the total amount of exports. With the termination of tolerance for *tsukaisutegin* in a silver crisis in the 1680s, the Chinese had to cover their expenses in other ways, including bringing funds with them for this purpose.

Gross trade figures, given the extremely high value of the main items (silk and silver), greatly overstate the physical size of the trade in Nagasaki. A small tonnage contrasts with a huge tonnage in Osaka's coastal traffic in rice or in Europe with the massive trade in basic goods such as minerals, wood, wine, and grain. The 29,314 *kanme* 貫目 of exports by Chinese for 1661, if converted into sterling currency, amounted to £685,068.[45] This figure is one and a half times the exports in 1665 of Ireland, a country with good statistics for the 1660s and, through its colonial status, a highly developed trade.

Yet it was, in terms of tonnage, a small traffic carried in 1661 on a mere thirty-nine vessels. During the Ching or Manchu challenge to the rule of the Ming dynasty that terminated only in 1684, the Ching dynasty prohibited foreign trade with the result that for several decades traders were Ming loyalists rather than traders from Ching-controlled districts, and disproportionately from Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and Siam. With the final triumph of the Ching in 1684 admitting a resumption of trade, the number of ships from the central reaches of the Chinese coast rose sharply from 1685. The peak was 192 in 1688.[46] In response, the Nagasaki authorities limited incoming vessels to seventy (later briefly raised to eighty), though many of these vessels were refused permission to land their cargoes.

For concrete information about individual vessels, the sole source is the *fūsetsugaki* 風説書 submitted from the 1640s by vessels on their arrival in Nagasaki.[47] Declarations provide some commentary on cargoes and the difficulties in sales.[48] While for vessels from China silver had always been the most sought-after item, the statements by the Chinese of Batavia in 1685 made a point of stressing that their return cargoes had been in goods, not silver.[49] The *fūsetsugaki* do not provide information on merchants, who must have been aboard as passengers. They remain a shadowy group.[50] They were probably small-scale operators, their operations somewhat augmented by petty speculations by sailors. The issue of new Japanese licences in Chinese from 1715 posed a problem for Chinese merchants who had traded in earlier years but had not been in Nagasaki at the time of their issue in

44 See trade details for 1659, 1686, 1693, and 1804 in Yamawaki 1964, pp. 35, 72, 103, 206.
45 Valued at £23.37 per *kan* (Cullen 2003, p. 41, note 51).
46 Ishii 1998, p. 10.
47 *Tōsen Shinkō kaitōroku* 唐船進港回悼録, *Shimabarabon Tōjin fūsetsugaki* 島原本唐人風説書, and *Wappu tomechō,* 割符留帳; Ōba 1974. The first and third items are single *kan* or volume sources. The second—the *Shimabara fūsetsugaki*—consists of thirty-seven volumes, *Shimabara fūsetsugaki* included. *Tōsen fūsetsugaki* from all sources amount to seventy-seven volumes. Ishii 1998, pp. 6–7.
48 Ishii 1998, p. 56.
49 Ishii 1998, pp. 211–13.
50 Matsuura 2007, pp. 191, 193.

1715. It affected "all together about fifty merchants, some of whom have traded to Japan for several years, as well as sailors . . . and are now experiencing financial hardship."[51] Licences were issued to vessels while in Nagasaki, and on their next voyage had to be produced for permission to enter the port; without them vessels were turned away.

Tonnage figures for individual vessels are rare.[52] However, according to Souza, junks were usually 120 to 220 tons burthen, small vessels or *wankan*s 30 to 150 tons.[53] Japanese ships, which of course were prohibited from trading overseas, were limited to a capacity of 500 *koku* (roughly seventy-five tons). Fisscher, a warehouseman in Dejima 1821–1829, noting that vessels from Ezo were the largest, observed that they were capable of taking a cargo of sixty tons while leaving generous room for passengers and crew.[54] The Ryukyu trade was free from this restriction. In the 1790s, a British officer had noted in Naha "twenty large junks" at anchor, from two to three hundred tons.[55] Vessels from the Ryukyus and Satsuma were said in the 1860s to have been somewhat short of twenty in number.[56]

For some purposes the value or at least estimates of cargoes are more useful. For cargoes in the 1710s, the most common estimate was 200 *kanme*, and in the 1720s even lower.[57] In contrast, the value of goods on the nine vessels arriving in 1803 was 5,800 *kanme*, or an average of 644 *kanme* per vessel.[58] Such cargo values were a new norm: the figure is even close to the value for cargoes on the annual Dutch vessel. The Chinese trade had become more ordered, and individual cargoes more valuable (with the continued rise in pharmaceutical products) and varied (including from 1763 silver from China), and the merchants fewer and more prosperous. While Dutch trade had contracted to about 1,000 *kanme* by the end of the century, Chinese trade in 1803 or 1804 was significantly higher than it had been in the 1720s. Exports other than metals, once a weakness of trade, expanded to fill the gap and were central to the trade. Regular, almost daily official harassment of the Chinese was no longer a feature, though the authorities could act decisively in 1825 or 1835–1837 in the face of problems.

4. Trade Statistics[59]

From 1648 figures for trade existed (the starting source of the figures on metals later supplied to Hakuseki).[60] With the exception of export figures for 1648–1672 (from the TKIR), figures are few.[61] There is a run in Iwao for 1690–1700, and in Yamawaki for 1704–1711 (source not directly indicated but on the evidence of references elsewhere apparently

51 Ishii 1998, p. 243. The licences were suspect to the Chinese authorities at the outset, and were seized by them for a considerable period of time before being returned to their holders.
52 On tonnage, see the "Glossary of Weights and Measures" in the Appendix.
53 Souza 1986, p. 133. On tonnage, see also Ishii 1998, pp. 3–4.
54 Van Overmeer Fisscher 1833, p. 251.
55 Broughton 1804, vol. 1, p. 239; BPP, vol. 5, p. 681.
56 BPP, vol. 5, p. 681.
57 Nakamura 1988, pp. 344, 347.
58 Nakamura 1988, p. 433. A memoir in 1837 assumed a value of 490 *kan* for cargoes. Hellyer 2009, p. 136.
59 See the Appendix for a glossary of weights and measures.
60 The figures covered gold, silver, and, from 1663, copper, exported from 1648 to 1708. Ackroyd 1979, p. 24.
61 TKIR 1912–1922, vol. 4. The figures are reproduced in Ōta 1992, pp. 93–95. They are also in Iwao 1953, p. 22.

Table A. Exports, Chinese and Dutch, including silver exports (averages).

	kanme				*kanme*		
	Chinese vessels				Dutch vessels		
years (average)	vessels (no)	exports	of which silver	balance*1	vessels (no)	exports	of which silver
1648–1654	49.4	10,694	5,199	2,293	6.6	6,054	5,139
1655–1661	48.6	17,786	12,671	1.074	7.6	6,767	5,008
1662–1668	36.4	12,734	8,322	2,167	8.4	8,719	4,940*2
1669–1670	37	12,825	345	3,021	5.5	10,665	—

*1. *Tsukaisutegin*. Silver retained by Chinese (and Dutch) from import income. Ōta includes it in the export total; Iwao correctly excludes it. The Dutch balance, while deducted from Dutch exports above, is not particularized in the table.
*2. Average of six years.

Table B. Composition of combined Chinese and Dutch exports (averages).*1 (in *kan*/*kanme*)

years (average)	Total*2	silver	gold*3	copper coins*4	merchandise*5
1645–1654	16,634	10,338		229	6,296
1655–1661	24,551	17,679		341	6,872
1662–1668	21,453	12,557	(7,769)*6	434	5,563
1669–1670	23,989	345	17,330	530	6,314
Chinese vessels only					
1671	11,815	950	5,931		3,934
1672	11,729	8,964	9		2,756

*1. Slight variances between the grand total and totals for China and Holland in Table 1 above.
*2. Net of Chinese and Dutch *tsukaisutegin*.
*3. Value of gold in *kanme*.
*4. Figures for 1662–1668 and 1669–1670 include exports by the Dutch, not available for earlier years. Though figures appear in Ōta's tables, they are excluded from his grand totals.
*5. Merchandise excluding metals apart from copper.
*6. Average for three years, 1666–1668. Individual years were as follows: 1666: 2292 *kanme*; 1667, 4,322 *kanme*; 1668, 16,784 *kanme*. A sum of 29 *kanme* was recorded for 1664.

from the diaries of the Chinese interpreters).[62] In Nakamura, there are imports for 1715–1726 from a *shahon, Shinpai kata kiroku* 写本信牌方記録.[63]

The *kan* itself was a unit of weight, and silver passed hands in coins or bars in terms of its weight (a *kan* of silver weighed 3.75 kilograms); *kanme* signifies silver money of account

62 Iwao 1953, p. 19; Yamawaki 1964, p. 106. The figures are reproduced in Ōta 1992, pp. 93–95. They are also in Iwao 1953, p. 22. Iwao's figures are only superficially different, with *tsukaisutegin* excluded from his table. Ōta has expressed doubts about the figures (Ōta 2000, pp. 152–53). The erratic values from year to year, in some years wholly out of proportion with any conceivable level, suggest strongly that they are to be disregarded.
63 Nakamura 1988, p. 347.

(with a variation in its purchasing power in proportion to commodity prices as they rose or fell). For commodity exports in an upsurge from 1658, especially by Chinese vessels which continued into the mid 1660s, a total for Chinese and Dutch trade combined of 36,982 *kanme* in 1661 was the peak.[64] The exports of silver, comprehended as a *commodity* within the total, peaked in the same year at 31,313 *kan*. These years were the high-water mark of the trade, both Dutch and Chinese. The silver exported was currency standard *chōgin* 丁銀 (silver bars with purity of 80 percent). Exports in 1650 were 6,827 *kan* of *chōgin* plus *haifukigin* 灰吹銀 (pure silver) and *gindōgu* 銀道具 (silverware). The amount of *tsukaisutegin* was 3,178 *kan*, and it remained substantial at least into the early 1670s. As silver exports were at that stage reduced and virtually ended in the mid-1680s, *tsukaisutegin* (silver balances or at least entitlements to silver, which in the case of the Chinese could also provide a cover for exporting silver) likewise ceased to exist.

The composition of exports underlined the vulnerable nature of the trade. Commodity trade in items other than metals were as little as a mere quarter of the total. Changes over the 1660s in regulating exports of silver, copper, and gold reflected the falling output of metals.[65] Given a sense of crisis, exports of silver to the Chinese were halted for almost three years before resuming at lower levels than in the past. In the years 1669–1671, silver to Chinese traders (now the only permitted outlet for silver) averaged a mere 547 *kan*. The short-term termination of silver exports was compensated for by dramatically increased exports of gold. In the very short term, that made it possible to maintain total exports by the Chinese and Dutch at a high level.

5. Contraction and Recovery: The Course of Trade ca.1672–1708

The need from the 1660s to conserve for home use the declining output of silver finally accounted for a notional ceiling to the value of trade in 1685 (6,000 *kanme* as the ceiling in silver money of account, for the Chinese trade, and 3,000 *kanme* for the Dutch). Already from 1668 the Dutch were no longer permitted to ship silver, but on the other hand were allowed a generous ceiling in gold (50,000 *ryō*, the equivalent of 3,000 *kan* of silver).[66] The celebrated limit of 6,000 *kan* applied both to silver (the metal itself in *kan* weight), and also to the total value of trade as measured in silver money of account (*kanme*). The original ceiling for 1685 rested pragmatically on the fact that exports of silver to China were around 6,000 *kan* in 1682–1684. However, given a persistent quest for silver and a shortage of the metal, exports of silver became nominal well before 1697. With silver progressively reduced, the ceilings lost their original significance, becoming mere orders of magnitude to guide the management of trade.

For the two decades from 1672, a shortage of trade figures makes some conjecture unavoidable. Exports of silver, for which figures do survive, averaging 6,184 *kan* in 1672–1684, were roughly a quarter of the level of the 1660s. A crude estimate of trade can be made for 1690–1694.

64 The total net of *tsukaisutegin*.
65 Cullen 2003, p. 42.
66 Round-figure conversion of silver *kan* into gold *ryō* at 17.2 *ryō* to a *kan* (at an official exchange rate of 58 *monme* to the *ryō*).

Table C. Exports to China 1690–1694 (average).
(in *kanme*)

copper	4,123
non-metal exports*	2,443
grand total	6,556

* There are no figures for the total of non-metal exports in 1690–1694, but a rough estimate is possible if we calculate the figure for 1663–1672 and then proceed to assume that it remained constant in later years. While copper and non-metal products were combined in a single rubric in the surviving trade abstract for 1663–1672, the known figures for copper, once converted into *kanme* averaging 798 *kanme*, when deducted from a total for copper and non-metal products of 3,241 *kanme* left a residue of 2,443 *kanme* as an estimate of non-metal exports in 1663–1672.

A value of 5,910 *kanme* for the China trade in 1693 is a confirmation of sorts of this crude arithmetic.[67] In other words, post-1672 trade was probably static. Despite post-1672 stagnation, trade acquired a real momentum in the second half of the 1690s. A policy from 1697 of the bartering or exchange of copper (*shiromono gae* 代物替) intended to encourage imports and guaranteed a supply of copper within a ceiling set at 5,000 *kanme*.[68] However, this facility itself accounted for a mere 42,000 piculs in 1697, well short of the total exports of 89,081 piculs of copper.[69]

In a table by Yamawaki for the years 1704–1711, exports were close to 12,000 *kanme* in two years, and above 12,000 in another two of the five years from 1704 to 1708. These high figures in turn explain a high level of silk imports before 1709.

Table D. Trade with China, 1704–1717.[70]

	Exports to China*		Imports
	kanme		*kin*
	Exports	Barter copper	Raw silk
1704	12,524	5,000	84,250
1705	7,625	2,670	38,525
1706	12,430	4,763	44,460
1707	11,859	4,100	70,970
1708	11,220	4,260	81,830
1709	4,561	2,720	23,850
1710	7,163	2,825	23,859
1711	4,794	600	50,276

* Export figures include the barter trades in copper and in marine products.

67 Yamawaki 1964, p. 103.
68 On *shiromono gae*, see Ackroyd 1979, pp. 242–43, and for a fuller account, Ōta 1992, pp. 345–64.
69 Price calculated on the basis of the data for 1697 in Yao 1998, p. 88. They give 8.4 piculs of copper to a *kan* of silver.
70 Yamawaki 1964, p. 106.

To 12,000 *kanme* should be added a figure for exports to Korea (in some ways simply an extension of the traffic in goods to and from China), negligble in the past but in 1684–1710 averaging a subsantial 2,977 *kanme*.[71] If, with much optimism, the fluctuations in the supply of copper from Osaka and Sakai are disregarded, a figure of 15,000 *kanme* makes it easy to see how political and commercial pressures in favor of imports of silk, ginseng, and medicines, all seen as vital, prevailed. Effectively this lobby ruled out the alternative strategy of simply cutting imports. The lobby, encouraged by the sharp rise in exports of copper in the late 1690s, even pressed for an increase in permitted imports.[72]

In 1698, Chinese exports of copper were 60,824 piculs and in 1708, 66,040 piculs or 7,204 *kanme* and 7,862 *kanme* respectively. A crude picture of the expanded export trade would emerge as follows.

Table E. Estimated exports in 1698 and 1708.
(in *kanme*)

	1698	1708
Copper to China	7,204	7,862
Other products*1	2,500	2,500
Dutch exports*2	2,228	1,541
Total	11,932	11,903

*1. This is a round figure for exports. The barter trade other than in copper was set at a value of 2,000 *kanme*, and averaged 2,389 *kanme* in 1710–1712. It was mainly in marine products. Exports appear to have been in two categories, *tawaramono* 俵物 (bagged goods) and *shoiro mono* 諸色物 (various goods). *Tawaramono* were *iriko* 煎海鼠 (sea cucumber extract), *hoshika* 干鰯 (dried sardines), *fukahire* 鱶鰭 (shark fins); *shoiro mono* were goods such as *shiitake* 椎茸 (mushrooms) and marine goods such as *surume* 鯣 (cuttle fish) and *konbu* 昆布 (tang).

*2. An import figure in the absence of export figures, hence an imperfect replacement.

The buoyant trade in wares to and from China contrasted with the Dutch trade, which was static or falling after 1700. If the Tsushima trade (ca. 3,000 *kanme*) is added to the figure for exports to China the short-term buoyancy of Chinese demand is all the more evident.

6. The Role of the Kaisho

An increasingly complex policy was operable only through the establishment in 1698 of the Kaisho (translated as the expressive Dutch word, *geldkamer* or cash office).[73] This office provided the machinery in Nagasaki to execute a closer scrutiny of what was already a highly managed trade. The emphasis in the office's work was on accounting operations, not on the physical transfer of goods. An *opperhoofd* was to observe in 1717 that, "It is a strange way of doing business. First we have to sell the goods and only after the goods have been sold they are inspected by the merchants."[74]

71 Tashiro 1976, p. 90.
72 Ackroyd 1979, pp. 242–43, 249.
73 The *locus classicus* is Nakamura 1988, pp. 390–422. See also *Nagasaki kenshi* 1985, pp. 581–98.
74 DDM 1700–1740, p. 215.

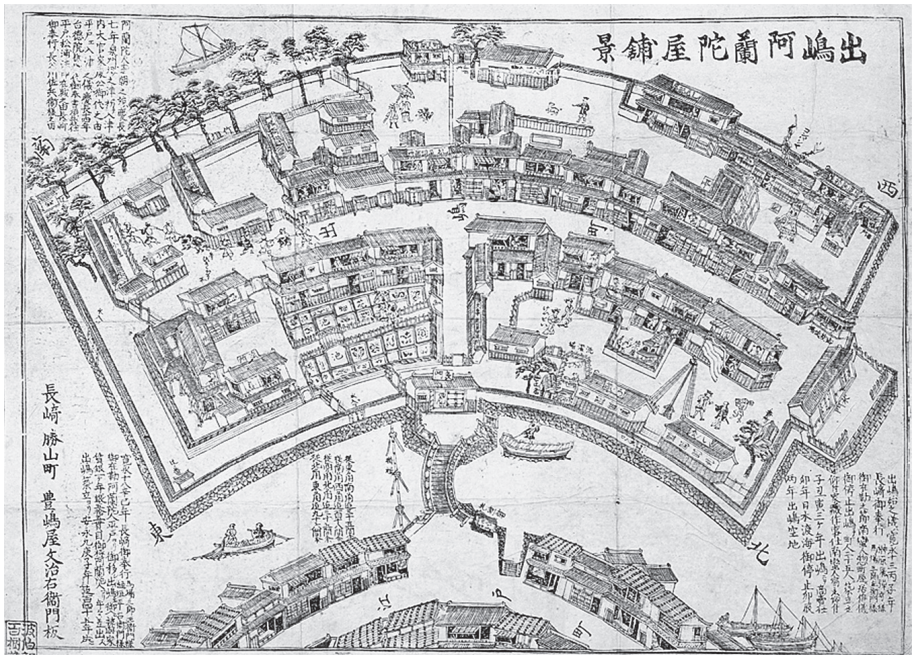

Figure 2. Dejima Island and structures (warehouses, residences, and the office for the interpreters). The entrance and exit by the bridge was guarded all day everyday. (Courtesy of Kobe City Museum)

Silver had not been prohibited in the letter of the law to the Chinese in 1685. For the thirteen years from 1685 to 1697 exports of *chōgin* (silver metal of currency standard) averaged a mere 229 *kan*.[75] In 1687 the figure was 465 *kan*; in 1693 it was a mere 2.5 *kan* of silver in a total 65 *kan* mainly of *gindōgu* silverware.[76] Exports of silverware averaged 77 *kan* in 1685–1697. From 1699, total silverware was limited to 100 *kan* a year, and its export was finally prohibited from 1708. From 1699, the export of silver itself was limited to minute quantities per vessel. For four years in 1718–1725, for which actual figures exist for some vessels, it was of the order of 2 *kan* per vessel, and in one year, 1718, quantities were somewhat more generous, in one instance actually being around 12 *kan*. From 1733, no more than 950 *monme* (that is, slightly less than one *kan*) per vessel was permitted. Between 1709 and 1762, shipments averaged 23 *kan*. Shipments were totally stopped in 1763, and Japan itself became an importer of silver.[77]

The office ran into difficulties in its management of the copper trade. There was the unceasing challenge to ensure a supply of copper to meet Chinese demands, eased only by a fall in Dutch exports of copper. The concept of an orderly barter of copper in exchange for imports was breaking down and, for want of copper, Chinese cash surpluses began to emerge. The barter traffic was recorded in separate files, that is, not entered in the general

75 Yamawaki 1964, pp. 57, 214.
76 Yamawaki 1964, pp. 57, 72, 103.
77 This paragraph draws on Yamawaki 1964, pp. 57, 213–15, and on the trade returns in Nagazumi 1987.

files. (In the 1709–1714 returns, the files are extant only for Dutch cargoes.) The consequence shows in Yamawaki's count from the surviving *satsu* of copper exports on Chinese vessels for 1711: a mere 17,547 piculs as against the actual Chinese exports that year of 42,579.

7. The Copper Supply, 1698–1715, and the Shinrei of 1715

The export of copper peaked in 1697 and 1698 at 89,081 and 90,202 piculs respectively.[78] It then fell sharply in 1699 and 1700 to the lowest level since 1694. In the first decade of the new century, quantities were to oscillate wildly. In February 1700, unprecedented permission had to be conceded to the Chinese "to leave large balances in Japan and settle these next year because there is not enough copper to export."[79] To keep the balance down, the authorities in some desperation conceded permission to export silver. The amount for the year was 1,085 *kan*.[80] Much, although not all of it, may have been in the form of silverware. The Dutch in February made a note of "secret" information that the Chinese were being permitted to buy silverware for want of copper.[81] However, there was a remarkable upturn in total copper exports in 1704–1710 to figures of between 64,000 and 74,000 piculs. Chinese exports in 1708 were second only to the peak figure of 1696.

The year 1708 was the last buoyant year. In early 1709, copper was already in insufficient supply and the last two junks of the season left belatedly in March.[82] Total exports of copper by both the Chinese and Dutch fell in 1711 to 52,578 piculs and in 1712 even more sharply to 37,701.[83] In June 1714, some vessels were again said to have been in Nagasaki for ten months. They were finally given permission to depart, leaving some of the income from sales behind them—in a repetition of what had occurred in 1700—to be used for the purchase of ink fish in the following year's sales.[84] Strict adherence to the ruling is seen in the Chinese exports of copper in 1715 of a mere 7,637 piculs. In contrast, Dutch exports at 11,500 piculs conformed closely to their level of the preceding year.

When the crisis in copper had to be faced, the strength of the political lobby that favored imports can be seen in the terms of the Shōtoku Shinrei 正徳新令 or new decree of 1715 regulating trade.[85] An impasse between optimists and pessimists was mirrored in the wavering of the ceiling level set in the first years, and in high exports. Opposition to cutbacks existed even among the *rōjū*, and was ended only on Yoshimune's ascent to office in 1716.[86] The new decree was, in essence, a response to the copper problem, which had replaced the silver crisis of an earlier generation. The bureaucratic and discredited *shiromono gae* was terminated, and replaced by a simple quantitative restriction of copper to 45,000 piculs. It was not in the circumstances ungenerous: the figure was almost identical to the

78 There is a convenient table of exports in *kin* 斤 from the outset of the copper trade up to 1715 in Kobata 1993, pp. 695–97.
79 DDR 1987, vol. 2 (1690–1700), p. 135.
80 Yamawaki 1964, p. 57.
81 DDR 1990, vol. 3 (1700–1710), p. 5 The exceptional silver exports for the year 1700 included 371 *kan* in silverware (Yamawaki 1964, p. 57).
82 DDM 1700–1740, p. 110.
83 Kobata 1993, p. 687.
84 DDM 1700–1740, p. 175.
85 Nakai 1988, pp. 106–107, 111–12; Ackroyd 1999, p. 249. On the decree, see Nakai 1988, pp. 109–14; Yamawaki 1964, pp. 140–47.
86 Nakai 1988, pp. 113–14.

level of exports in 1713 and 1714. Chinese vessels, however, were henceforth to be limited to thirty, under a new and tight licencing system (with licenses granted only to vessels already in the trade); Dutch vessels to two. The promises of trade ceilings being maintained and of a reduced but relatively generous ceiling for copper were one matter, but reality was another. The protracted time Chinese vessels still had to remain in port in 1718–1720 was an indication of reality.[87]

The symbolic notional ceiling for the Chinese trade was reduced from 6,000 *kanme* to 4,000 *kanme* for the year 1720. More concretely, the ceiling of 45,000 piculs of copper was reduced to 30,000 piculs (20,000 for the China trade, 10,000 for the Dutch).[88] Aside from an interlude in the early 1740s, an attempt was made until 1791, though with variable success, to adhere to the 1720 ceilings. It was the regulations in 1719–1720 that finally marked a change from a policy which favored foreign trade to one of contracting its scale. The average value of imports in the 1720s was the lowest on statistical record.[89] The nominal ceilings were gradually reduced, replaced in 1791 by still lower figures, which then remained unchanged until the time of the opening of the ports in 1859. In 1791, the nominal ceiling of Chinese trade was set at 2,740 *kanme*, the Dutch trade at 700 *kanme*.[90] The number of vessels was limited to ten Chinese vessels and one Dutch. In the case of copper the effort by the authorities to honor the promises of 1720 was finally abandoned, and copper to the Chinese and the Dutch alike entered a decidedly downward trajectory. In 1839, Chinese exports of copper, now a minor constituent of the export trade, were a mere 920 *kanme* (that is, less than 8,000 piculs).

8. Post-1720 Evolution of Trade

In contrast to an earlier story of success in maintaining trade at, or even above, the level of 1685, the trend from 1720 was firmly downwards. Japan had little in quantity to offer in the short term that foreigners wanted other than metals. Post-1690, copper remained the crucial element in maintaining a Chinese and Dutch presence. As for imports of silk, they began to fall as early as the 1660s and contracted sharply in the early 1700s. Even imports through Tsushima, now the main channel for silk, contracted. Sugar, already an import and becoming the main one when silk waned, was a relatively low value product and did not attract merchants to Nagasaki as silk had done. Nor did it provide the profit that silk did at its peak.

The ceilings for Nagasaki trade do not include the permitted ceilings for trade with Korea (1,000 *kanme*) and the less clear or changing ceiling for the Ryukyus (variable but

87 Nakamura 1988, pp. 348–51.

88 There is an almost complete absence of statistics of copper exports from Japanese sources for the second half of the 1710s and the following three decades (see footnote 26 above). In the few incomplete figures given in Katsu (1976), a count of ten vessels and twenty thousand piculs for 1746 is probably close to actual exports. Nagazumi (1987) has counts of Chinese vessels for some years, with 16,590 piculs in 1725, and another of twelve vessels and 17,415 piculs in 1745 that are probably close to the actual figures. Her statistics for 1724 and 1725 suggest that many Chinese vessels were rationed to 760 piculs; from the 1750s, the figures provided by Katsu suggest totals of twenty thousand piculs or less. There was no gap in Dutch figures. For them, see the comprehensive accounts by Shimada 2006 and Suzuki 2012.

89 Nakamura 1988, p. 347.

90 Nakamura 1988, pp. 372–75, provides details of ceilings from 1715 to 1848.

not above 1,250 *kanme*).[91] The Tsushima trade was favourably singled out, notably by its access to silver, when silver exports from Nagasaki had virtually ended, and in 1710–1714 specially minted silver coins made to the former standard were provided. The reason for this favor was almost certainly the fact that this trade was tightly controlled by a small milieu in Tsushima and a factory in Pusan, and the belief that abuses at the two ports could be monitored or prevented more easily than in Nagasaki. Atypically, trade figures are known because of the survival of an account book into which an unknown official of the Wakan 倭館 copied in 1716 details of the trade for 1684–1711.[92] The scale and importance of the Tsushima trade has been a subject of controversy mainly over the accuracy of calculations, but the general outlook is not in doubt.[93] While raw silk imports in the Korean trade with Tsushima for a time exceeded those of Nagasaki, they were in sharp decline in the first decade when the silk import trade at large was declining.[94] It is not in doubt that the general trade of Tsushima never came near to equaling the Nagasaki trade. It flourished for a decade either side of 1700; it later tapered off and in time altogether withered. The Satsuma trade unfortunately lacks documentation comparable to that of the Tsushima trade. Its profile is obscure, and its scale rests on a belief, lacking in quantitative terms, of widespread smuggling.

The fact that copper had been necessary to attract the Chinese and Dutch for a long time had protected copper from further decline. As far as the Dutch trade is concerned, the most obvious cutback was in gold, which was reduced to a negligible amount, and in camphor, much sought after but where their demands often were not met. The Dutch trade entered slowly into a permanent decline. In contrast the Chinese trade staged a recovery, at first shadowy because of an absence of statistics but very evident in trade figures for 1803 and 1804. The trade had acquired a new dynamic. Though the number of ships was small, the value of cargoes was much higher and the export trade, laggard apart from metals in the past, shared in the dynamism. The trade in real value was now well above the post-1791 notional ceiling of 2,740 *kanme*. Exports were 7,345 *kanme* in 1804 and 7,034 *kanme* in 1839.[95] In something of a parallel to the pre-1715 *shiromono gae*, imports of pharmaceuticals were encouraged provided the outlay was matched by exports of marine products.[96]

The cutbacks in copper and in silk imports combined with the limitation in 1715 of Dutch vessels to two a year was the decisive feature in accounting for the reversal of the city's fortunes. The presence of crews (on a single vessel up to one hundred men or more), in combination with the long delay in getting return cargoes, resulted for decades into the eighteenth century in a transient population of several thousand Chinese in Nagasaki. With its China trade gradually reduced, the fears of the Dutch abandoning Dejima often recurred, and in the years in which either one or both Dutch vessels failed to appear, poverty was rife. The port's population, at a peak in 1696 of 64,524, was halved by 1789. Officials

91 See footnote 10.
92 Tashiro 1976, p. 87.
93 Lewis 2003, pp. 96–98.
94 See figures in Tashiro 1976, p. 89 and in Yamawaki 1964, p. 229. The fullest recent account is in Nakamura 2000, pp. 173–91.
95 Yamawaki 1964, pp. 206, 208. In 1839, 2,093 *kanme* of imports were retained, that is, not expended on exports.
96 Hellyer 2009, pp. 80–81, 84, 97, 121–24, 173–74, 178, 182, 183.

and their dependents accounted for about a third of the population. In other words, it was a company town, and from the early eighteenth century, the reduced traffic added to the penury characteristic of all direct employees of the shogunate.

Adjusting to altered circumstances over the eighteenth century, dynamism finally reemerged in the trade to China. With vessels from the southern areas in Southeast Asia declining, trade now centered on ports in the central reaches of the coastline. By the 1760s this region (Nanjin, Ningbo, and Shanghai) accounted for 90 percent of shipping.[97] This contraction was in part a consequence of a direct involvement by the Chinese government in securing its supply of copper. Management was entrusted by the Ching government to the Bō 茆 family who, from 1735 over several generations, became responsible for securing copper on behalf of the Ching government.[98] Hao has described it as a *soshikika* 組織化 (systemization) of trade.[99] Much on the trade was on contract. The Bō family was provided with loans from the Ching authorities with this object in view. Control at both ends (in China for copper, in Nagasaki for pharmaceuticals) gave the trade a new stability. An added support was the import of silver on the account of the shogunal authorities from 1763.[100] Imports linked to the ever-pressing demand for medical/pharmaceutical goods ensured that far from trade stagnating, it began to expand. The buoyancy may explain why Satsuma tapped into the Chinese trade of Nagasaki. A few of the Chinese vessels licensed to trade in Nagasaki unloaded irregularly on the coasts of Satsuma with the consent of the Satsuma authorities.

9. Smuggling: Hovering Chinese Vessels on the Coasts and *Uchi Harai*.

Smuggling looms large in the story of trade. The secretive nature of smuggling, readily assumed in modern writing to have been large, has usually led in Europe and Japan to a great overestimation of its scale. Japan lacked the high duties which, in Europe, led to a concentrated and highly organized international business in a small number of commodities. It has been argued that the reduction of official trade from the 1710s provided a fillip for its expansion in Japan.[101] There was both small-scale activity and larger ventures. Small-scale activity was driven by the sheer number of Chinese vessels present in Nagasaki in the late 1690s and early-eighteenth century, and by the problems both in marketing a surfeit of imports and in securing either goods or metal for the return journey.

With no high duties to evade, Japan's concerns in the Genroku 元禄 era about smuggling centered on the outward smuggling of silver. The administration was obsessive to the point of hysteria often over minute quantities, with savage penalties for Japanese who became partners of Chinese. The stay of the Chinese was worsened by a harsh and arbitrary administration, long delays, and an uncertain outcome to their demands for return cargoes. Some official actions operated outside the realm of the judicial processes recorded in the *hankachō*. At times the Chinese were required to strip naked before they boarded their

97 Shimada 2006, p. 25.
98 For a table of the Bō family succession, see Hao 2015, p. 181.
99 Charts illustrating the nature and evolution of the new organization of trade are in Hao 2015, pp. 245–46.
100 For details of both ships and houses engaged in the silver trade, see Hao 2015, pp. 259 and 266. In peak years, imports exceeded 1,000 *kan*, and in the two years of 1801 and 1802 were around the 2,000 *kan* mark. From 1804, they fell very sharply. Nakamura 1988, p. 447.
101 Nakamura 2000, pp. 146, 148; Hao 2015, p. 15.

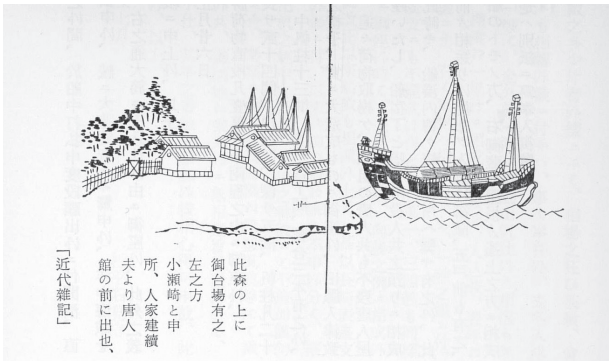

Figure 3. "To the left of the fort on the summit of the forest in a location called Shōraisaki are dwelling houses; proceeding from that point and facing them the residence for the Chinese stands out [Recent miscellaneous notes]". (TKIR *zokushū*, vol.1, p. 136.)

vessels. The "island" was subject to searches, and when vessels were being loaded, streets in the proximity were closed and policing was redoubled. For the Chinese, many of whom were small or marginal traders, some mere sailors, a demand for silver reflected less a large secret trade in silver imagined by officials than an often fatal hope of concealing minute quantities as the reward for petty speculations ashore. The *opperhoofd* in his *dagregister* often expressed the opinion that a profitless trade was driving the Chinese in desperation to resort to smuggling. A frenzy in punishing smugglers in the wake of the closure of silver exports was recorded in Kaempfer's account of his stay as medical doctor in Dejima in 1690–1692.[102] This changed in time as ships became fewer and minor abuses became less pervasive. When a skipper was allowed to board his junk in 1738 without his person being searched, the *opperhoofd* noted that "The Chinese are treated better than before."[103] By the middle of the century the travails of the Chinese had begun to lose their former painful prominence in the *dagregister*.

Official concern about larger ventures had already emerged before 1715. In 1714 in the wake of a request by Osaka merchants, the shogunate issued orders to the *bugyō* of cities and to daimyo. The arrest of some smugglers in Osaka led to forty-one citizens of Nagasaki being named as accomplices, and later, after three days of house searches in Nagasaki, seventeen arrests were made.[104] Smugglers required access to established distribution channels. They neither bartered nor bought goods for their return journey. Hence they depended on contact with businessmen with capital or at least cash. Some of the ringleaders were said by the Dutch in 1713 to be individuals who had settled in Shimonoseki and Osaka. For these reasons, Chinese vessels hovering (*hyōryū* 漂流, "drifting on the coast") were rarely to be found beyond the coasts of Kyushu from Nagasaki to Kokura,

102 Bodart-Bailey 1999, pp. 221, 222, 227, 391, 393–95, 397, 435, 437, 438.
103 DDM 1700–1740, p. 481.
104 DDM 1700–1740, p. 176.

coincidentally also close to the established routes of Chinese and of the much rarer Korean vessels.[105]

Where goods appeared in Osaka or in northern Japan, as far afield as Kaga 加賀 or Matsumae 松前, they originated in Kyushu. In general, goods legal and illegal alike were moved by established coastal shipping, its scale measured somewhat in a report in June 1713 of some thirteen vessels with "Chinese goods" being then in Osaka.[106] Inevitably, Satsuma vessels, active participants in coastal traffic, were drawn into it. While in 1772, on the evidence of the *hankachō*, goods were loaded into vessels which had travelled from the north of Japan,[107] Satsuma vessels equally travelled far afield. One of the attractions of engagement was the use directly or indirectly of Chinese goods as payment for the marine products of Matsumae, especially *iriko* sea cucumber. The exchange centered on the province of Echigo 越後, especially at Niigata 新潟. The shipwreck in 1835 of a Satsuma vessel loaded with Chinese medicines was much commented on in official reports. While *bugyō* belief in 1835 has an exaggerated tone, it saw an exchange of Chinese goods for marine products as responsible, via the Ryukyus, for an alleged decline in the quality and quantity of marine goods arriving on Nagasaki for its own China trade.[108]

Chinese vessels hovering off the coast of Kyushu aimed to land goods at particular locations, counting on contact with local merchants. There were two official responses to this challenge. The first was to demand identification of the Nagasaki origins of Chinese goods both in Kyushu and in the final market destination. As early as 1714 the *opperhoofd* recorded that, "Even if the Chinese do succeed in smuggling goods into the country, it has become impossible for the merchants to sell them since they have to say from whom and where they bought them."[109] Preventive measures had some teeth. In Osaka in 1718, two thousand pieces of smuggled loincloth and three thousand Persian fabrics were identified and confiscated.[110] Preventive action was even more important at the local level in Kyushu. As early as 1717 in Saga and Chikuzen, the buying and selling of Chinese goods were under observation. Of the merchants in Kokura 小倉 only one was licensed to buy Chinese goods and from not more than one of four designated Nagasaki houses.[111] Saga was in 1763 prohibited from handling Chinese goods with the exception of pharmaceutical products.[112]

The second step was to ensure within Kyushu a vigorous coastal watch when hovering vessels were spotted. The policy of *uchi harai* developed in response to their presence in the region.[113] The domains mainly concerned were Kokura and Fukuoka. The shogunate itself in 1718 dispatched a *metsuke* 目付け from Edo to Kokura to direct the chasing off of Chinese vessels.[114] The *opperhoofd* was prompted to observe that, "The smuggling trade must be very profitable since the Chinese do not seem to be afraid of the Japanese musket

105 "Hovering" is a technical term formerly of English customs usage.
106 DDM 1700–1740, p. 161.
107 Nakamura 2000, p. 151.
108 Yamawaki 1964. See the long quotation on pp. 269–71.
109 DDM 1700–1740, p. 181.
110 DDM 1700–1740, p. 223.
111 Nakamura 2000, p. 148.
112 Nakamura 2000, p. 152.
113 Yamamoto 1995, p. 159. See also Wilson 2015, pp. 67–93.
114 DDM 1700–1740, p. 222. The *metsuke*'s name was Watanabe Geki. Wilson 2015, pp. 80–83, 84–86, 89.

balls."[115] In 1726 when two vessels off the coast at Shimonoseki refused to depart, the Japanese opened fire, killing several crew.[116]

As for the scale of the traffic, the market for most goods was finite. The exception was the insatiable market for pharmaceutical products. Traders, too, both in Nagasaki and in Osaka, claimed that slow sales were caused by a flood of goods. The sparse evidence suggests, however, that ventures were episodic rather than sustained, and that smugglers had to count on established intermediaries. In other words, unlike Europe where trade depended on the irresistible appeal in high-tax regimes of a handful of smuggled consumer goods (passing through parallel markets), smugglers in Japan did not have the benefit of a network of their own.

The Ryukyus and Satsuma stood in a special position. Unlike the Gotō 五島 islands, sometimes seen as a haven for smugglers, Satsuma did not openly welcome Chinese smugglers. It had a lucrative market in Nagasaki, and had no wish to undermine its trade at large by free and ready access for vessels to its shores in rivalry with its own shipping. The balance implicit in the *bakuhan taisei* (system of shogunate and domains sharing administration of Japan) is relevant. The Shogunate and *han* shared an interest in coastal protection and the domains of Kyushu followed a policy of *uchi harai*. Ships were fired on and, as often reported in the *dagregister*, vessels arrested off Satsuma's coasts were brought into Nagasaki by escorts. In contrast to this harmony about hovering vessels, once one turns to regulation of the trade of the Ryukyus, the interest of shogunate and Satsuma diverged. The shogunate, especially under the long reign of Ienari 家斉 (1787–1837), valued a good relationship with Satsuma more than did the officials in Nagasaki with an exclusive interest in the port. From the outset, in the seventeenth century Satsuma's Ryukyu trade had been limited by order (eased on occasion when Chinese goods were in short supply) with the aim of preserving a near monopoly of trade for Nagasaki, and excluding most Ryukyu goods from direct sale by the domain to other markets.[117] Regulations had set ceilings for individual goods rather than for an overall valuation of the trade. Given variations over time and some uncertainty over the total value, the safest figure remains that of Kaempfer in 1691 as a working estimate. In 1810, the number of Chinese goods that Satsuma could trade even on these terms had been a mere eight items. The notional figure of permitted trade was set at 1,720 *kanme* in 1825 (with specified limits for each of sixteen items).[118] In 1810, in regard to a question as to the coverage of permitted Chinese medicines, opposition by the Kaisho was overruled by the shogunate.[119] However, permitted trade even in the categories of 1825 excluded many medical items.

10. Problems in Interpreting the Character of Smuggling

Satsuma is associated in the modern literature with smuggling, at first inwards to the domain and as a second stage outwards from the domain to Japanese markets. There are two aspects to this. The first is the scale of the Ryukyu trade, and more specifically the

115 DDM 1700–1740, p 223.
116 DDM 1700–1740, p. 317.
117 Yamawaki 1964, pp. 266–69.
118 Uehara 1981, pp. 197, 209–10.
119 Yamawaki 1964, p. 271.

extent to which the trade as a whole was more substantial than the amount actually landed in Nagasaki (often somewhat below the permitted level).

This leads to the second aspect, namely the extent to which there was on its coastline a smuggling of goods into Satsuma by Chinese vessels. In some studies, a large smuggling trade on the coasts of Satsuma is taken for granted, as for instance those by authoritative historians like Miyamoto Matao 宮本又郎 and Hayami Akira 速水融 or Ichimura Yūichi 市村祐一 and Ōishi Shinzaburō 大石慎三郎, who in brief words saw the coast of Satsuma as frequented by smugglers.[120] The picture is not different in monographs on trade. Yamawaki alleged that Chinese vessels were numerous in the many islands on the western coastline of Satsuma and that the *han* provided Chinese interpreters.[121] Uehara, drawing on official concern in 1835, saw an open-ended Chinese traffic "in the many islands off Satsuma [where] Chinese vessels were able to conduct a lucrative trade."[122]

The problem that this poses can be seen at its starkest in Sakai's article, which assumes at one and the same time an official tolerance of smuggling on the coasts and, in contradictory fashion, a need by smugglers to conceal their goods:

> This activity could have been stamped out had the Satsuma government so desired. It is probable that the government was a silent partner in the trade, though this would be difficult to establish. Satsuma's own seclusion policy, which kept out strangers and hampered the activities of bakufu agents, no doubt served to provide the necessary security for the operators along the coast.[123]

Satsuma on the record of its history did not welcome Chinese vessels hovering on its coasts. The question is, therefore, whether the welcome in Satsuma for some vessels which broke their China-Nagasaki run to visit Satsuma extended to other Chinese vessels, and whether these latter vessels were numerous.[124] Given a place for two or three vessels, which broke their route to Nagasaki, it seems likely that there were Chinese vessels coming direct from China, which enjoyed similar permission. But with a closely monitored trade, a jealous protection of its own commercial interests, and harsh production monopolies, an unmanaged trade is highly improbable. In other words, the activity may have been both known and closely policed. If smuggling by Chinese vessels on the coasts of Satsuma was as wholesale as suggested in modern accounts, calculations based on the number of vessels in the Ryukyu-Satsuma fleet would result, with the addition of Chinese vessels, in either an impossibly large quantity of smuggled goods or else a greatly underutilized fleet. Traditions of concealment of smuggled goods in locations on the coast point not to the silent toleration suggested by Sakai, but to clandestine activity intended to evade domain restrictions.[125]

A rising trade in marine products financing an equally burgeoning trade in pharmaceutical goods led over time to a significant direct exchange in the northwest of Honshu of marine products from Ezo for pharmaceutical products from Satsuma or from

120 Ichimura and Ōishi 1995, pp. 50–51; Miyamoto and Hayami 1988, pp. 163–64.
121 Yamawaki 1965, pp. 93–95, 100.
122 Uehara 1981, p. 211.
123 Sakai 1964, p. 402.
124 Bōnotsu, a center at an earlier date, is a suspected case. See Hellyer 2009, pp. 46, 130.
125 *Kagoshima kenshi* 1940, pp. 758–62.

Nagasaki. The shogunal policy had long been to keep Satsuma out of this circuit.[126] This concern may also explain why statistics of the quantities of pharmaceuticals imported in Nagasaki, which had lapsed in 1735, resumed in 1820.[127] The shogunate took over Niigata in 1843, in part acting in response to a report of 1841 of an estimated six Satsuma vessels a year in Niigata.[128] Claims of depression or of difficulties in 1835–1837 emanating from Nagasaki may have been special pleading in favor of the Kaisho's business.[129] But there may have been a contrast between intervals within the 1830s. While imports in Nagasaki in 1839 were 20 percent above the level of 1804 (carried on eight vessels compared with eleven in 1804), there is evidence of unsold goods in the latter years of the decade.[130]

The uncovering in 1835 of some of the vessels licenced for the Nagasaki trade as visiting Satsuma is not surprising. The marketing in Nagasaki of Chinese wares coming from the Ryukyus gave Satsuma merchants regular business links in Nagasaki to an extent enjoyed by no other domain. The domain's *yashiki* had its officials; daimyo sometimes visited either Dejima or the Dutch in their inn when in Edo on the *hofries* (an association famous in the long friendship of the daimyo Shimazu Shigehide 島津重豪 [1745–1833]); and Satsuma merchants had long resided in Nagasaki. From 1810, the Ishimoto family settled there, and in 1822–1835 Ishimoto Heibei 石本平兵衛, domain agent in Nagasaki, selling commodities on domain accounts and remitting payments to the domain, had a direct interest in the trade. In 1835, he even passed into shogunal service.[131] An overlapping profile of the trade of the two ports inevitably meant that merchants were likely to find shared interests.

11. Official Measures in the 1830s

A vigorous campaign conducted against smugglers in 1825 had a local context. A total of fifty-three cases appeared in the *hankachō* between the second month of 1825 and the third month of 1826 as against token action at other times, namely an average of below three cases a year from 1718 to 1862. It was still being followed up in 1827. Events developed rapidly in the 1830s. The arrival of two Chinese vessels in Nagasaki in ballast in the autumn of 1834 was an awakening.[132] The *bugyō* in 1835 in the third month ordered the implementation of tight supervision.[133] The routine responsibility for this fell on the *metsuke* Togawa Yasuzumi 戸川安済 (1787–1868), already in Nagasaki and promoted on the spot to the rank of *bugyō* in 1836. At the outset of 1836 the authorities became aware of a Chinese vessel which visited Kataura 片浦 at the end of 1835 and shortly afterwards entered Nagasaki.[134] Togawa had made a series of notes on the pattern of the shipping at Nagasaki from the

126 Hellyer 2009, pp. 86–88, 132.
127 Miyashita 1997, pp. 250–67.
128 Hellyer 2009, pp. 139–40.
129 Hellyer 2009, pp. 134–64.
130 Yamawaki 1964, pp. 206, 208.
131 Sakai 1964, pp. 399–400; Buno 1954.
132 TKIR *zokushū*, vol.1, p. 164. From reports/commentary, 1835.3.
133 TKIR *zokushū*, vol I, p. 162, 1835.3; p. 186, 1835.7.
134 TKIR *zokushū*, vol.1, p. 130, referred to on the first page of *kan* no. 8 in this volume. Kataura is sited on the tip of a promontory (in the modern district of Kasasa-chō 笠沙町 in Minami Satsuma-shi 南さつま市) on the southern end of a long curve, on the external coast of the western arm of Kagoshima bay. From Yahoo Maps.

outset of the century, adding further detail for vessels in the Bunka 文化 and Bunsei 文政 periods, and for Tenpō 天保 years noting the numerical identification from their last visit to Nagasaki of vessels dallying in Satsuma.[135] However, Kataura apart, another source, *Kindai zakki* 近代雑記, cited in the same pages of the TKIR *zokushū*, contained a sketch of a Chinese vessel anchored seawards of a *Tōjinkan* 唐人館 residence for Chinese at Shōraisaki 小瀬崎.[136] Though the TKIR is usually a negligible source for action against smuggling, for 1835–1837 the account was enriched by access by the compilers of the TKIR *zokushū* to a copy of the widely transcribed *Nagasaki shi zokuhen* 長崎志続編 into which Togawa had copied commercial intelligence and correspondence.

In the mid-1830s the Nagasaki authorities pursued a carrot-and-stick policy. On the one hand, punishment of Chinese for criminal offenses had been extended in the late 1820s to branding on the arm;[137] a number of Chinese were jailed, including, as the Chinese shipowners claimed in petitions, innocent ones as well as the guilty. On the other hand, the atmosphere was open enough for the Chinese shipowners to petition collectively about the effects of *bugyōsho* actions on their trade, and petitions were listened to attentively and sometimes favorably. Even if some ships were excluded from trade and shipowners punished, the overall impact of official policy may have been benign. There was a remarkable temporary intervention by the authorities to buy goods the merchants were unable to sell. This may have been recognition of the adverse effects of policy on trade and an effort to mop up unsold goods, which might otherwise be smuggled. This was first taken in response to a request from the Chinese merchants, apparently in 1835, and a request for a further year was acceded to in 1836, in the fourth month.[138] That the policy may have been extended for several further years is suggested by the fact that the figure for exports fell short of imports of 9,217 *kanme* in 1839, leaving a balance of 2,183, and suggests that sales may have been sluggish. Held in *gin satsu* (paper money convertible into silver), it was used for several purposes, including defraying costs of the Chinese community in Nagasaki.[139]

The many reports in the TKIR papers have no reference to Chinese vessels literally hovering on the Satsuma coasts. There was, however, repeated concern about Chinese goods introduced to Satsuma and filtered to Osaka and other trading centers.[140] The concern led finally to an order prohibiting all Satsuma trade in Chinese goods in 1839.[141] This was in some senses a futile gesture as in the absence of direct action by the *bugyōsho* in the domain or on its borders it was unenforceable. The 1839 order was reversed in 1846 when trade

135 TKIR *zokushū*, vol. 1, pp. 130–48.

136 TKIR *zokushū*, vol. 1, p. 136. The location has not been identified with certainty but may be Kozechō 小瀬町 in Ichiki kushikino shi いちき串木野市, Kagoshima-ken 鹿児島県 at the northern end of the curve of coast referred to in note 134. This location, if correct, is within the immediate hinterland of Kagoshima town itself, and is not the island suggested in some modern writing.

137 TKIR *zokushū*, vol. 1, p. 183. Japanese practice involved limited legal action against Chinese in the past. They were usually expelled or prohibited from returning, and jailing was uncommon. They were said not to be subject to physical punishment (Hao 2015, pp. 150–51), though in fact the Dutch recorded the torturing of Chinese in 1718 (DDM 1700–1740, p. 222).

138 TKIR *zokushū*, vo1. 1, pp. 337–38. 1836.4.12.

139 Yamawaki 1964, p. 208.

140 See the long reports/commentary on trade, TKIR *zokushū*, vol. 1, 1835.3, pp. 162–86; 1835.7 to 1835.11, pp. 186–202; 1836.4 (also with correspondence from earlier dates), pp. 320–58. Details of *bugyōsho* dealings with shipowners are continued in later pages of the volume.

141 Yamawaki 1964, pp. 272–75; Uehara 1981, p. 250.

in sixteen commodities was restored.[142] If Abe Masahiro 阿部正弘, the new leader, made the change to improve relations with Satsuma (in part because of the common threat of the novel presence in the 1840s of some Europeans in the Ryukyus), the concession itself points to the problems of reconciling the conflicting interests of the Kaisho and of Satsuma (sometimes denoted by the name of the domain's head town, Kagoshima). While permitted exports were restored to the former number, the ceiling set at 1,200 *kanme* was well below the former ceiling of 1,720 *kanme*.

12. Quantification of the Trade

The trade from the Ryukyus to Satsuma is impossible to assess other than very tentatively in quantitative terms. At the peak, a fleet of some twenty vessels may serve as some measure of general capacity. Some twenty cargoes each valued at 200 *kan* would have amounted to 4,000 *kanme*. Deducting 1,000 *kanme* for sales in Nagasaki, the balance of goods destined for sales in the domain or beyond its boundaries could have been 3,000 *kanme*. Allowing for a number of imponderables making for either plus or minus adjustments, a trade of 3,000 *kanme* is very credible. No data are available in domain archives on the trade of Satsuma for 1808–1839.[143] Matsui's suggestion—which appears to be derived from revenue data—that "after 1830" the exports from Satsuma were 5,000 *kanme* is not clear enough to be convincing.[144] However, it would tend to lend support to higher rather than lower estimates. Satsuma exports, whether 3,000 or 5,000 *kanme*, would in relative terms have made official apprehensions understandable.[145]

The domain's legitimate traffic in Nagasaki, plus unquantified and, indeed, unquantifiable traffic to other locations gave Satsuma a real weight. The basic problem is the absence of documentation of the unquantified trade from the Ryukyus to Satsuma. Even Satsuma business in Nagasaki is poorly documented in surviving Kaisho records, and only from a late date. In 1847, it was 947 *kanme*, in 1848 1,337 *kanme*, and 951 *kanme* in 1849.[146] In 1858 it was 2,265 *kanme*, and in 1859 1,346 *kanme*.[147] In the eighteenth century, reference in the *dagregister* to vessels to and from Naha underlined the regularity of the traffic. In 1739, for instance, four from Naha were noted. And at year end, seven sailed to Naha. In 1734, ten vessels were noted from Naha, a total that might suggest in 1734 a trade of 1,000 to 2,000 *kanme* (assuming that the value of cargoes lay between 100 and 200 *kanme*). As the trade of vessels from China to Nagasaki averaged 4,000 *kanme* in the 1720s, Satsuma's supply to the Kaisho, even if we cannot be sure of its precise value, would have been a significant addition to Kaisho business.

Moving back along the supply chain, the trade in goods of Chinese origin from the Ryukyus to Satsuma has no statistical documentation. For the trade between China and the Ryukyus in both imports and exports there are data only for the years from 1821 to

142 Sakai 1964, p. 398; Yamawaki 1964, pp. 272–75. Nakamura 1988, pp. 501–504 has details for the permitted items from 1825 to 1846.
143 Matsui 1975, p. 244.
144 Matsui 1975, p. 246.
145 Figure for 1803 in Nakamura 1988, p. 433.
146 Uehara 1981, p. 266. Matsui has taken the amount of the actual trade to have been at its permitted ceiling (2015, p. 246), which was far from being the case.
147 Nakamura 1988, p. 508.

1873.[148] These statistics are uncharacteristically complete (presumably reflecting Satsuma's close scrutiny of the trade even in Naha) though in modern accounts the figures warrant no comment on their archival significance. Exports to China from the Ryukyus, limited in number, reflected the poverty of the Ryukyus (and indirectly of Satsuma itself). By far the largest item in volume terms in exports was *kaigan sai* 海岸菜 (seashore plants and edibles), running at 2,000 to 3,000 piculs. As they would take up no more than 180 tons of shipping space, they suggest the underlying limitations of the trade, and indeed of Satsuma's capacity to pay for imports. Imports were varied, but medical goods (*yakuzai* 薬材) and textiles were the sole significant categories. Medical (or pharmaceutical) products, demand for which in Nagasaki repeatedly outran supply, were the real strength of Satsuma's trade. Amid fluctuations, where goods came from China to the Ryukyus, by reverting to but not exceeding preceding peaks, the pattern suggested a steady rather than expansive profile.

13. Bakumatsu Trade of Nagasaki and Satsuma

From the late 1840s, Nagasaki trade wilted. From 1846 to 1851, the number of Chinese vessels in Nagasaki was down to between four and six a year, and in the 1850s as few as one, two, or three. In 1858, there was a single vessel. A table for 1858 seems to suggest imports worth 3,792 *kanme* and exports of 5,214 *kanme*. The superficially substantial figures appear to relate to two-way speculative movements in currency or precious metals and no longer mirror a commodity trade. Nagasaki benefited from English trade from 1859. The consular reports from Nagasaki noted trade from Shanghai worth 1,104,061 dollars (the equivalent of approximately 7,360 *kanme*) for the first half of the year. However, as the port did not open to trade until 1 July, it must have referred only to China traffic. That, combined with a lack of vessels, suggests speculation in currency as the main feature in transactions. A figure of 870,436 dollars for the second half of the year covers the first months of open trade, and would have included trade in English as well as Chinese hands. Rutherford Alcock, British consul general, noted in June 1859 that there were already fifteen British residents and fifteen foreign vessels in the harbor.[149]

Less is known of Satsuma. The domain's trade continued in the 1860s and to a degree in stable quantitative terms if the statistics of trade between the Ryukyus and China are regarded as a proxy for its trade. In the shelling by the British of Kagoshima in 1863, five junks from the Ryukyus in the harbor were destroyed.[150] The past history of arbitrary levies imposed on Osaka merchants helped to sharpen the fears Saigō Takamori expressed on October 1867 to Ernest Satow about the implications of the shogunate proposing to take over control of the new trade in prospect for Osaka.[151]

Though in a precarious state in the 1850s, Nagasaki's trade increased in the 1860s. At the outset of the decade, at least as measured by the Shanghai statistics (the focal point for British trade at the outset of the open ports), its trade exceeded that of the newly opened port of Kanagawa. This reflected the initial advantage of Nagasaki as an established center, and the consequent settlement of several merchants, especially Thomas Glover, arriving

148 Uehara 1981, pp. 271, 272. Figures for fifteen years. There are fuller tables for every tenth year from 1821 to 1871 in *Kagoshima kenshi* 1940, pp. 765–72.
149 BPP, vol. 4, p. 13.
150 BPP, vol. 2, p. 109.
151 Satow 1921, p. 179.

in 1859, first dealing in tea and from 1864 establishing close ties with dissident domain.[152] Nagasaki's poor immediate hinterland handicapped it in relative terms. As it made more sense to buy near the sources, foreign trade moved to Yokohama (the successor location to Kanagawa) and after 1868 also to Osaka/Hyogo. While Kagoshima's trade appeared to hold its own in the 1860s (on the evidence of the figures for China-Ryukyu trade), the import of medical goods failed to return to the high 1861 figure. In other words, it may have begun to lose ground in the wake of open trade from China to other ports. The Chinese were quick to become the most numerous foreigners in the ports. Satsuma and the Ryukyus alike figure little in the commercial story of early Meiji. Satsuma's small oceangoing fleet probably counted for less in Satsuma leadership of the future Meiji navy than the realpolitik of ensuring that defence was shared in a rough and ready way between the two great rivals, Choshu and Satsuma.

14. Conclusion

Japanese trade had continued to expand for several decades in the wake of the introduction of *sakoku*. Later, when silver was virtually prohibited, political pressures in support of maintaining and even expanding imports existed for a time. The contraction of the Dutch trade, very real by the end of the 1690s, was the beginning of the long-term trade decline of Nagasaki. The pattern of the China trade is more nuanced. Exports to China rose in the 1690s and in the following decade, but thereafter trade fell and stagnated. But by the end of the eighteenth century, cargoes of greater value on a much-reduced number of vessels represented a new vigor. Imports in 1804 were 83 percent above the average of the 1720s. Demand conditions favored Satsuma's irregular trade as much as they did Nagasaki's legal trade. Nagasaki's exports to China of 7,345 *kanme* in 1804, combined with estimated Satsuma/Ryukyu exports of 3,000–4,000 *kanme*, would give a figure in excess of 11,000 *kanme*, close to the relatively high exports to China a century before in 1704–1708.[153] But the comparison is not quite like with like. The Tsushima trade, if added to the 1704–1708 total, would have raised the total for the base years. Later, for the nineteenth century Satsuma trade, we have to rely on a crude estimate, which must have included shipments to other parts of Japan, as well as trade with China. Japan's trade, moreover, had become increasingly an exchange of marine products for pharmaceutical imports. Satsuma and Nagasaki were in sharp competition with one another for imports and exports alike in what may have been difficult years in the late 1830s. Perhaps significantly, exports from Nagasaki to China, resting on surviving figures for a mere two years at 7,035 *kanme* for 1839, were somewhat below the level of 1804.

Uchi harai (fire on and repel), a measure originally intended to deal with smugglers, was directed against Western vessels from the 1790s to the early 1840s. From the 1840s, it was to take second place to wider defence preoccupations. Influenced by the rise in the number of foreign vessels on Japan's coasts, fear of the risk of disruption to the vital trade in rice from the northern domains to Edo led finally to the remarkable study of Edo's

152 Jansen 2000, p. 316.

153 Satsuma sales to the Kaisho are disregarded to avoid double counting as they were in all probability reexported to China.

intake by sea of goods for the year 1856.[154] Defence concerns centered on the approaches to Edo. While Noell Wilson has seen complacency recur in Nagasaki in the decades after the *Phaeton* incident, sustained investment in Edo Bay and its approaches began in the 1840s.[155] By 1853 there were one hundred cannons in batteries around Edo Bay, though Admiral Perry's men had a dismissive opinion of them. Effective cannons required high-quality cast iron. This need was met by small blast furnaces in several domains in the 1850s, producing annually around three hundred tons of good-quality cast iron.[156] The cannon in Edo Bay came from Saga.[157] While Japanese cannons lost artillery duels with foreign warships in the strait of Shimonoseki in 1863 and 1864 and in Kagoshima in 1863, the cannons inflicted real damage on the enemy, notably so in the latter and most serious instance.

If, in the 1820s, shogunal officials had divided over *uchi harai*, daimyo did so in the 1850s over opening ports to trade. Acquiescence in 1858 was for many daimyo a means of buying time, intended from a position of later-acquired strength, either to end or change the treaties. As for the new trade, an ongoing difference in mint ratio (that is, the relative price of silver and gold) between the outside world and Japan, together with a hybrid currency, introduced an extended period of problems, some simply in bookkeeping terms, but some very real.[158] On the commodity front, *sakoku* has often been seen as having had a high cost in opportunities foregone. Overblown accounts of *ikki* (rural unrest) have been taken as proof of impoverishment caused by a closed society. But Japan in the final decades of *sakoku* was already a food surplus region.[159] Its isolation moreover had not prevented its silk industry from developing dynamically; tea production, in now specialist regions responding to a growing domestic taste, had become larger and more efficient. Silk and tea, both sold to Americans, were to be the backbone of foreign trade. While exports went to the United States, imports were drawn in more widely. If one made a counterfactual argument of opening the ports in, say, 1848, the external markets would not have been there. But in extending its frontier to the Pacific, the American market trebled from 1859 to 1900 (from a population of 23.2 million to 76.2 million). Foreign trade in 1848 would have been modest in outcome; later, resting on a fast-spreading railway system, it led to a vast market and a changed course of history for both Japan and the broad north Pacific.

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154 Cullen 2009, pp. 205–206.
155 Wilson 2015, pp. 135–70.
156 Cullen 2003, p. 171.
157 Wilson 2015, pp. 162–68.
158 Cullen 2010, pp. 74–79
159 Ishikawa 1967, pp. 94–95, 98–100.

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APPENDIX

Glossary of Weights and Measures

kin 斤: unit of weight, 160 *monme*, 0.6 kg or 1.32 lb.

kan 貫: unit of weight, 1,000 *monme*, 3.75 kg or 8.27 lb.

kanme 貫目: silver (coin or metal) by weight as a measure of value. Silver coins were assessed by weight, their purchasing power fluctuating in proportion to the commodity price level and to demand for silver relative to other coins, especially the gold *ryō*.

koku 石: unit of capacity, approx. 180 litres or 5 bushels. Weight of a *koku* of rice approx. 150 kg or 330 lb.

monme 匁: unit of weight, 1,000 to the *kan* and *kanme*.

picul ピクル: *pikuru*, unit of weight, 60.48 kg or 133 1/3 lb . Weight often quoted in *kin* (100 *kin* to a picul).

ryō 両: Round-figure conversion of silver *kan* into gold *ryō* at 17.2 *ryō* to a *kan* (see section 5 of this paper). An official exchange rate, as opposed to the market rate, of 58 *monme* to the *ryō*. The official rate was set from time to time by shogunal decree (See Cullen 2003, pp. 73, 76).

ton: maritime ton: gross tonnage (measure of total capacity), net tonnage (gross tonnage less capacity reserved for crew and passengers), and deadweight tonnage (weight of cargo). Japanese maritime tonnage calculated in *koku* (see above). Japanese figures are probably of net capacity or deadweight tonnage. Net capacity and deadweight cargo of a sailing vessel probably differed little for a cargo of rice.

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